



NEWS RELEASE

OFFICE OF THE UNITED STATES ATTORNEY
WESTERN DISTRICT OF MISSOURI

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

ILLINOIS MAN PLEADS GUILTY TO IDENTITY THEFT OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

KANSAS CITY, Mo. – Todd P. Graves, United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, announced an Illinois man pleaded guilty in federal court today to participating in a conspiracy to commit identity theft.

Roy Ndidì Eledan, 41, of Streamwood, Ill., pleaded guilty before U.S. District Judge Fernando J. Gaitan this morning to the charge contained in a June 1, 2004, federal indictment. **Eledan** is a permanent resident of the United States from Nigeria.

Eledan admitted to his role in the conspiracy to commit fraud by using stolen personal identification information, consisting of names and Social Security numbers illegally obtained from an employee roster from the office of the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Columbia, Mo. The NRCS is a department within the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Personal and financial information of dozens of NRCS employees was stolen with the intention of committing a variety of financial frauds, Graves said, including using the names and Social Security numbers to apply for credit card accounts at Bank One of Chicago, Ill. Co-conspirators accessed the Web site of First USA Bank and completed applications over the Internet using the stolen identity information of the NRCS employees. They then used the credit card accounts to obtain convenience checks, which they deposited into accounts at other financial institutions in the Chicago area.

Eledan provided a bank account where convenience checks could be deposited, Graves said, and received 20 percent of the proceeds as his share. In December 2003, **Eledan** recruited another person to participate in the conspiracy by providing a mailing address where credit cards could be delivered.

By pleading guilty today, Graves said, **Eledan** admitted that the amount of loss caused by

the conspiracy exceeds \$30,000.

Under federal statutes, **Eledan** could be subject to a sentence of up to five years in federal prison without parole, plus a fine up to \$250,000. A sentencing hearing will be scheduled after the completion of a presentence investigation by the United States Probation Office.

This case is being prosecuted by Assistant U.S. Attorney John E. Cowles. It was investigated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture - Office of Inspector General, Chicago, Ill., Police Department, U.S. Postal Inspection Service (Chicago, Ill., office), Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Social Security Administration - Office of Inspector General, Department of Treasury Financial Crimes Enforcement Network, and the National White Collar Crime Center.

This news release, as well as additional information about the office of the United States Attorney for the Western District of Missouri, is available on-line at

www.usdoj.gov/usao/mow